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ABSTRACT

Though the adjustment of domiciliary residents has been studied with personality inventories derived from personality theory and from psychiatric classification systems, there is a need to study the adjustment of residents with instruments derived from organizational theory. Gordon reported that domiciliary residents had high scores on the Work Environment Preference Schedule (WEPS), reflecting their adjustment to a highly structured organization. This study was carried out to determine whether 121 domiciliary residents with high scores were indeed rated by their supervisors as functioning more effectively in terms of supervisors' rating on the Adjective Check List (ACL). Residents with high Total scores and high scores on the Traditionalism component were given ACL ratings indicating that they were seen as having less achievement, dominance, endurance, and order. It was estimated that a high score on the Total WEPS and on the Traditionalism component does not represent successful adaptation to organizational authority, but a rigid, unquestioning attitude. Individuals with such unquestioning attitudes may adapt relatively successfully in a nonchanging organization; however, the rigidity of their belief systems prevents them from making changes and they are more likely than others to have failures in adaptation and to require assistance, including domiciliation. (Author)

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Orientation To Authority In The Domiciliary

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The adjustment of domiciliary residents has been studied for a number of years using personality inventories derived from personality theory and psychiatric classification systems (Apfeldorf, Scheinker, & Whitman, 1966; Apfeldorf, Hunley, & Cooper, 1971; Apfeldorf, Hunley & Cooper, 1972; Apfeldorf & Hunley, 1975). Various MMPI alcoholism scales (Apfeldorf & Hunley, 1975) and some of the need and empirical scales of the Adjective Check List (Apfeldorf & Hunley, 1971) have been found to discriminate domiciliary residents, who get into difficulties requiring disciplinary action from other residents. A need exists to study the adjustment of residents who have and do not have disciplinary difficulties from the view of organizational theory. The work of Leonard Gordon (1973) is of value in this connection. He has developed and applied the Work Environment Preference Schedule (WEPS), which measures the attitude to authority fostered by many large organizations. In such industrial, governmental, or educational organizations there is a hierarchal system of superordination and subordination. Each position in the hierarchy has well defined activities and responsibilities with authority delimited to that necessary for discharge of duties. Reliability of behavior is maintained by directives, rules, and regulations. Standard operating procedures and reward and punishment schemes determine the exact manner in which duties are to be performed.

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Gordon identified five components of the orientation to authority: Self-subordination (S) - a willingness to comply fully with the stated wishes of a superior and to have decisions made for one by a higher authority; Compartmentalization (C) - confidence in expert judgment and need to restrict one's concern to one's area of specialization; Impersonalization (I) - a preference for impersonal or formal relationships with others on the job, particularly between individuals at different organizational levels; Rule Conformity (R) - a desire for the security afforded by adherence to rules and regulations and standard operating procedures; and Traditionalism (T) - need for the security provided by organizational identification and conformity to the in-group norm. A respondent obtains a score of 2 if he endorses either "strongly agree" or "agree," a score of 1 if he endorses "undecided" or "disagree," and a score of 0 if he endorses "strongly disagree." The maximum score on the 30-item form is 60, and 48 on the 24-item form.

Gordon considered the scale to be of value in characterizing adjustment in any organization. The low scorer will be dissatisfied with organizations having restrictive work environments and highly structured tasks. The high scorer is suited for positions that are highly structured, but may become dissatisfied if independence and initiative is expected. Gordon (1973) found that the high scorer tended to have less education and lower occupational status, consistent with a lesser desire for initiative and a greater desire for a structured work environment.

The validity of the scale has been checked using sample groups such as Air Force ROTC students. The results indicated that remainers had high scores as compared to dropouts. This suggests that the remainers had attitudes conducive to remaining in an hierarchal organization. Similar studies have been conducted with military academy seniors, striking and nonstriking teachers, and industrial workers.

Do these same attitudes to authority and organization carry over in older domiciled individuals? These individuals are no longer actively in the work force, but are still part of a large organization. On entry they are instructed regarding the regulations of the domiciliary and each is given a specific constructive assignment (Apfeldorf, Hunley, & Cooper, 1972). Gordon (1973) expressed the belief that attitudes to organizational authority do carry over and noted the high means found for both male and female members of a VA domiciliary, who had been residents for an extended period of time.

The present study was conducted to determine whether or not domiciliary residents have high scores on the WEPS. If so, do these high scores reflect constructive adjustment to the domiciliary? Are high WEPS scorers dependent on others and do they seek support? Do they avoid situations calling for choice and decision making? Are high scorers more likely to stay in the institution and stay out of disciplinary difficulties?

METHOD

The 30-item WEPS was administered to 175 domiciliary men as part of a larger study of values. Each of the five component scores and the total WEPS score were obtained. Though the Compartmentalization score is no longer listed in the latest manual, Gordon (1973) considered it of utility in characterizing individuals of lower occupational status.

A large number of residents (N = 121) were rated on the Adjective Check List by two section leaders responsible for the supervision of the residents. The Adjective Check List (ACL) had its inception as a technique for gathering and ordering the observations made on subjects by staff raters. Usefulness of the ACL in the domiciliary has been explored in a previous study (Apfeldorf & Hunley, 1971), where it was found that various ACL scales correlated significantly with such diverse criteria as disciplinary offense and alcoholism. The check list (Gough and Heilbrun, 1965) is scored in terms of 24 empirical and need scales. The need scales are based on Murray's system and cover 15 basic needs. Such need scales as Dominance, Achievement, and Deference are of particular interest. As an example, the high scorer on Dominance is seen as forceful, strong-willed, and persevering. The low scorer is unsure of himself and avoids situations calling for choice and decision making. Similarly, the high scorer on Achievement is seen as striving to be outstanding in pursuits of socially recognized significance, while the low scorer is skeptical or dubious about the

rewards that might come from effort and involvement. The high scorer on Succorance is dependent on others, seeks support, and expects to find it, while the low scorer is independent, resourceful, and self-sufficient.

The residents' conformity to the domiciliary regulations can be evaluated by their record of disciplinary offenses. These offenses were mainly obtained for problem drinking and associated disturbances. More detailed background and description of criteria for obtaining disciplinary offenses are presented elsewhere (Apfeldorf, Hunley, & Cooper, 1972; Apfeldorf & Hunley, 1971). Residents varied in their institutional stability in remaining in the domiciliary or leaving and getting readmitted. The number of admissions appears to be an index of this restlessness.

Information on years of education and main occupation was also available in the domiciliary files or in a routinely administered life history questionnaire. The resident's occupational level was rated by referring to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (U.S. Employment Services, 1949). A resident's reported main occupation can be utilized to place him in one of the following classifications: 0 - representing professional, technical, and managerial occupations; 1 - clerical and sales; 2 - skilled occupations; 3 - service and semiskilled occupations; 4 - agricultural and unskilled occupations.

RESULTS

The domiciliary sample of residents obtained a high mean score of 48.47 ± 7.56 on the 30-item WEPS. The average score per item was 1.62, close to the average score of 1.65 reported by Gordon for his domiciliary sample. Table 1 presents the intercorrelations between the five factor scores for the population. These are all moderate and positive, ranging from .43 to .63, and justify the use of a single total score for certain purposes. Table 2 presents the correlations of the WEPS Total and Traditionalism scores with ACL scores, and Table 3 presents the correlations of WEPS Total score and Traditionalism score with various life history, demographic indices, and vocabulary.

Insert Tables 1, 2, and 3 about here

It might be noted that the WEPS Total score correlated negatively with six ACL scores. The highest correlations were with Achievement, Dominance, and Order. Other correlations were with Endurance, Number Checked, and Defensiveness. These correlations suggest that the high scorer on the total WEPS tends to be described with adjectives suggestive of low achievement, order, dominance, and endurance. The correlations with Dominance and Achievement suggest that the high scorer on the WEPS tends to avoid situations calling for decision making and choice (Dominance) and is uncertain about risking his labors (Achievement).

The negative correlations with Endurance and Order might best be interpreted as reflecting an intolerance of prolonged effort or attention (Endurance) and dislike of delay and deliberation and preference for impulsive action (Order).

Examination of the data indicated that most of the WEPS component scales also tended to correlate with the ACL scales. Thus, four of the five component scales correlated significantly with ACL Dominance, though none with as high a correlation as found between WEPS Total score and Dominance. Such a finding by itself would support the sole employment of WEPS Total score to account for variance with ACL scales. However, it was noted that the Traditionalism component correlated with a higher number (13) of ACL variables (See Table 2.). The high scorer on the Traditionalism scale is described on many more personality dimensions. Besides being described as less achieving and enduring, he is also described as being low on such interpersonal dimensions as affiliation, nurturance, and self-control.

Examination of the various demographic and life history indices (Table 3) indicates that the Traditionalism scale has more correlations (negative) with education and vocabulary and positive correlations with occupational level, disciplinary offense, and number of admissions. This suggests that the high scorer tends to be somewhat less educated, has a lower level occupation, is more likely to be involved in disciplinary offenses, and has a greater number of admissions.

Stepwise regression analyses indicated that scores on the Traditionalism scale are best accounted for by a combination of both ACL variables and various personal history characteristics. Complete demographic information and vocabulary scores were available on 110 of the 121 residents, who had been rated on the ACL. A combination of three demographic variables (education, offense, and number of admissions), the vocabulary level, and 12 of the 13 ACL variables listed in Table 2 (excluding Defensiveness) resulted in a multiple correlation coefficient of .43.

Since the items of the Traditionalism scale appear to be more differentiating, it may be of interest to list them:

(1) A person's expression of feeling about his organization should conform to those of his fellow employees.

(2) Outsiders who complain about an organization are usually either ignorant of the facts or misinformed.

(3) It is unwise for an employee to question well established ways of doing things.

(4) Pins, commendations, ceremonies, etc. are all signs of a good organization.

(5) A person should defend the actions of his organization against any criticisms by outsiders.

(6) Length of service should be given almost as much recognition as level of performance.

MMPI scores were available on men from previous studies (Apfeldorf, Scheinker, & Whitman, 1966; Apfeldorf, Hunley, & Cooper, 1971; Apfeldorf, Hunley, & Cooper, 1972). The scores on the traditional MMPI clinical scales were correlated with WEPS scores to determine whether the WEPS was assessing dimensions different from those of the MMPI. Correlations between MMPI and WEPS scores were low, never higher than .16 suggesting that the two instruments have negligible variance in common.

DISCUSSION

Gordon's report that VA domiciliary residents had extremely high scores on the WEPS is confirmed by these findings. The sample of residents achieved high scores on the scale with an average endorsement of items at about 1.62, close to the average endorsement of 1.65 reported by Gordon.

The high WEPS scores of domiciliary residents and the correlations with the various ACL scales suggest that the WEPS may be a particularly germane scale for the measurement of adaptation to organizational authority in the domiciliary. It may be a valuable addition to more traditional scales such as the MMPI in either clinical research or program evaluation. The analysis of the correlations of ACL scores with WEPS scores clarify the nature of the adaptation made by high WEPS scorers. High scores suggest a need to avoid choice and avoid risking

of labors and efforts as indicated by negative correlations with the Dominance and Achievement scales. Such needs are, however, not necessarily fully adaptive in the domiciliary setting. In fact, high scorers on the Traditionalism component are, if anything, somewhat more likely to be involved in disciplinary offenses and in readmissions than are low scoring individuals. High scorers on the Traditionalism component tend to be described with somewhat less favorable adjectives by the staff members.

The scale cannot be readily considered a measure of constructive adjustment to organizational authority. It appears to represent a constellation of rigid, unquestioning attitudes. Individuals with such attitudes may adapt relatively successfully in a nonchanging world by remaining in a large organization. However, as demands change, the rigidity of their belief systems prevent them from making changes that would enable them to adjust and remain in the community. They are, therefore, more likely to require assistance from others including domiciliation.

Inspection of the correlations between WEPS scores and such traditional personality measures as the MMPI indicate that correlations are generally low, suggesting that WEPS scores contribute additional independent variance to the prediction of the residents' behavior. This suggests that the WEPS may be a valuable addition to the more

traditional scales in either clinical research or program evaluation studies.

SUMMARY

Though the adjustment of domiciliary residents has been studied with personality inventories derived from personality theory and from psychiatric classification systems, there is a need to study the adjustment of residents with instruments derived from organizational theory. Gordon reported that domiciliary residents had high scores on the Work Environment Preference Schedule (WEPS), reflecting their adjustment to a highly structured organization. This study was carried out to determine whether 121 domiciliary residents with high scores were indeed rated by their supervisors as functioning more effectively in terms of supervisors' rating on the Adjective Check List (ACL). Residents with high Total scores and high scores on the Traditionalism component were given ACL ratings indicating that they were seen as having less achievement, dominance, endurance, and order. It was estimated that a high score on the Total WEPS and on the Traditionalism component does not represent successful adaptation to organizational authority, but a rigid, unquestioning attitude. Individuals with such unquestioning attitudes may adapt relatively successfully in a nonchanging organization; however, the rigidity of their belief systems prevents them from making changes and they are more likely than others to have failures in adaptation and to require assistance, including domiciliation.

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Table 1

Intercorrelations of the Five-Factor Scores

of the WEPS (N = 175)

	S	C	I	R	T	Total
Self-Subordination (S)		.462	.520	.534	.627	.772
Compartmentalization (C)			.431	.524	.527	.744
Impersonalization (I)				.558	.612	.771
Rule Conformity (R)					.591	.793
Traditionalism (T)						.846

Table 2

Correlations of ACL Variables with WEPS

Total Score and Traditionalism Score

(N = 121)

ACL Variables	Total Score	Traditionalism Score
No. Checked	- .187*	
Defensiveness	- .181*	- . 255**
No. of Favorable Adjectives		- .261**
Self-Control		- .216*
Personal Adjustment		- .221*
Achievement	- .247**	- .282**
Dominance	- .261**	- .243**
Endurance	- .226*	- .303**
Order	- .250**	- .311**
Intraception		- .254**
Nurturance		- .204*
Affiliation		- .224*
Succorance		+ .197*
Deference		- .182*

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

Table 3

Correlations of Various Demographic and Life History Indices with WEPS Total Score and Traditionalism Score

	Total Score	Traditionalism Score
Education (N = 175)	- .160*	- .215**
Vocabulary (N = 143)	- .196*	- .217**
Disciplinary Offense (N = 175)		+ .156*
Number of Admissions (N = 175)		+ .177*
Occupational Level (N = 174)		+ .182*

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$